

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2569

As Reported by House Committee On:
Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness

Title: An act relating to providing funding to local government for purposes of registered sex and kidnapping offender address verification and community notification.

Brief Description: Providing funding to local government for purposes of registered sex and kidnapping offender address verification and community notification.

Sponsors: Representatives Dickerson, O'Brien, Lantz, Takko, Williams, Seaquist, Morrell, Ormsby, Liias, Miloscia, Hurst, McIntire, Kenney, Campbell, VanDeWege, Barlow, Green and Simpson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness: 1/23/08 [DP].

<p>Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appropriates \$5 million to help local law enforcement agencies perform address verification and community notification.
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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives O'Brien, Chair; Hurst, Vice Chair; Pearson, Ranking Minority Member; Ross, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Ahern, Goodman and Kirby.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

Under the Community Protection Act of 1990, a sex and kidnapping offender must register with the county sheriff of the county in which he or she resides. An offender must provide a variety of information upon registration including name, complete residential address, date and place of birth, place of employment, crime of conviction, date and place of conviction, aliases, Social Security number, photograph, and fingerprints.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Law enforcement agencies are authorized to release information regarding registered sex offenders based on the offenders' risk level. For example, for a risk level I offender (evaluated as presenting the least amount of risk to the larger community), a law enforcement agency may only disclose the offender's information to specified persons and entities; e.g., schools, victims, and witnesses. For a risk level III offender (evaluated as presenting the largest amount of risk to the larger community), a law enforcement agency may disclose the offender's information to the public at large.

In addition to community notification, law enforcement agencies are required to make reasonable attempts to verify that an offender is living at his or her registered address. At a minimum, address verification must consist of sending a verification form to the offender's registered address. The form must be sent at least every 90 days for offenders who have been designated as sexually violent predators. For all other offenders, the form must be sent out at least once a year. A law enforcement agency must make reasonable attempts to locate an offender who fails to return the form.

Summary of Bill:

A \$5 million appropriation is made for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2009, from the Public Safety and Education Account to the Criminal Justice Training Commission for purposes of assisting local law enforcement agencies: (a) to verify the addresses and residency of registered sex and kidnapping offenders; and (b) to notify the community of registered sex and kidnapping offenders within their jurisdictions. The funds are to be distributed to the local law enforcement agencies by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs.

Appropriation: The sum of \$5 million is made for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2009, from the Public Safety and Education Account to the Criminal Justice Training Commission.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) An increasing number of requirements have been placed upon local law enforcement agencies with respect to sex and kidnapping offender registration. These requirements have been a financial strain on local governments, which are already strapped for funds. This has resulted in almost no monitoring for level I sex offenders. Local law enforcement agencies have indicated that more laws are not needed to increase public safety in this area; what is needed is the funding to enforce the existing requirements. This bill provides a one-time appropriation, which will help local law enforcement monitor offenders and notify the public. The bill also creates a mechanism for ongoing funding.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Dickerson, prime sponsor; Don Pierce, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs; and Dan Kimball, Thurston County Sheriff for Washington Association of County Officials.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.